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Media Contact: Ken Severson, ISDH
(317) 233-7104

U.S. MEDICARE TOUR BUS VISITS INDIANA AND HOOSIERS INVITED TO BE 'SUMMERFIT'

INDIANAPOLIS—The U.S. Medicare tour bus stopped today at the Tippecanoe Community Health Clinic in Lafayette to highlight the role of healthy behaviors in disease prevention and to encourage seniors to become aware of Medicare's important prevention benefits. The bus is visiting each of the 48 continental states as part of the HealthierUS initiative, a national effort to improve people's lives, prevent and reduce the costs of disease, and promote community health and wellness.

State Health Commissioner Judy Monroe, M.D. and Melissa Johnson, executive director, President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, were at the event to recognize the Clinic, the Tippecanoe County Health Department, Purdue University, and the Coalition for Living Well After 50 for their efforts to promote the INShape Indiana message of eating well, moving more, and quitting smoking.

"Collaboration is the key to fighting obesity and reducing the burden of chronic disease," said Johnson. "Governor Daniels' INShape Indiana initiative has inspired organizations and communities all over the state to work together to promote healthier behaviors."

Last year, the Tippecanoe Community Health Clinic helped recruit patients, community agencies, and businesses to participate in INShape Indiana's 10 in 10 Challenge. Leading the way in Tippecanoe County, the Clinic had half of its 90 employees sign up to lose 10 pounds in 10 weeks; many of whom met or exceeded their goals. More than 40,000 people participated in the 10 in 10 Challenge, with an average weight loss of 7 ¼ pounds for those who responded to the final survey.

"Because of INShape Indiana, thousands of Hoosiers in communities all across the state have pledged to eat healthier, move more, and stop smoking," said Dr. Monroe. "I am pleased by the progress we've made, and want to thank all of our partners for the hard work they've done. However, I know we still have far to go, and challenge every person in this state to keep us moving in the right direction."

Dr. Monroe and Johnson were joined by James Galloway, M.D., U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Regional Health Administrator, and Maureen Lydon, HHS Regional Director, both with Region V, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Medicare covers many important screenings and other preventive benefits to help people live healthier and more active lives. As part of the HealthierUS initiative, Medicare and its partners will raise awareness of the importance of preventing chronic disease and illness like heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes.

"Deciding to live a healthier life is easy; it's the follow-through that's hard," said Dr. Galloway. "The HealthierUS initiative is about making physical activity a part of your day, eating more healthy foods, protecting yourself and your family from illness, and avoiding risks to your health and the health of your loved ones. Bad habits are not easily broken. Good ones are not easily won. But, with the help of INShape Indiana, you can do it!"

Recently released 2006 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data show that Indiana is making some improvements. Indiana is now ranked 5th in the nation for smoking, down from 2nd in 2005.

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MEDICARE TOUR BUS
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With 24.1% of adult Hoosiers smoking, the state is still well above the national average of 20.1%. In addition, Indiana is still 10th in the nation for obesity, based on body mass index. According to the 2006 BRFSS survey, the percentage of obese based on their body mass index (27.8%) remained unchanged from 2005.

That's why INShape Indiana is launching its next program, SummerFit, on June 11. For eight weeks this summer, INShape Indiana is encouraging all Hoosiers to get active, eat healthy foods, and refrain from smoking. Members of INShape Indiana will receive weekly e-mails containing tips for staying fit during the summer months. Participants can track their progress through a point system; for each healthy activity an INShape member completes, they will earn points toward the weekly goal. Participants of SummerFit will then be able to bring their point totals to Governor Daniels' INShape Indiana SummerFit Plaza at the Indiana State Fair from August 8 to August 11 to be eligible for a prize.

"The mission of our clinic is to provide quality, cost-effective, comprehensive health care to our community's underserved members," said Michael Bohlin, M.D., Tippecanoe County Health Officer. "We are lucky to have such strong community partners that enable us to offer that kind of care and to promote a healthier Indiana. We look forward to continuing our partnership with INShape Indiana."

While in Indiana on June 7 and June 8, the Medicare tour bus also made stops around central Indiana to recognize the efforts of some of INShape Indiana's other partners, including:

- CVS Pharmacy;
- Dick's Sporting Goods;
- IndyParks;
- MDwise;
- YMCA.

Earlier in the day, Governor Mitch Daniels received special recognition for his INShape Indiana health initiative. Melissa Johnson presented the Governor with the President's Council Medallion at the Indiana State Kick-off Meeting for "A Healthier US Starts Here" at the Children's Museum in Indianapolis.

Gov. Daniels launched INShape Indiana in July 2005, encouraging Hoosiers to make healthy choices. The program provides statewide information on physical fitness activities, nutrition, and smoking cessation through its Web site at: www.inshape.IN.gov.

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